

A REGULAR PUBLIC WORK SESSION OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD HELD IN THE SYDNEY V. STOLDT, JR. COURT ROOM OF THE RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL, 131 NORTH MAPLE AVENUE, RIDGEWOOD, NEW JERSEY, ON FEBRUARY 5, 2025 AT 7:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER – OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT – ROLL CALL – FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Vagianos called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. and read the Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. At roll call, the following were present: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Mayor Vagianos. Also present were Keith Kazmark, Village Manager, and Heather Mailander, Village Clerk. Matthew Rogers, Village Attorney, was absent from the meeting.

Mayor Vagianos led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ellie Gruber, a resident of Ridgewood, said that a “note to the community” regarding plans for development of the Schedler property was disseminated a week or two ago. This morning, Ms. Gruber attended a workshop of science teachers from grades kindergarten through twelfth grade, where it was stated that “facts matter.” Ms. Gruber then gave some facts about the Schedler property. She stated that a berm was constructed at the Schedler property, since the soil was mostly free, and concrete highway barriers abutting homes are not effective noise barriers. Ms. Gruber stated that the Schoolhouse Museum is on the list of historic places, as well as the seven acres encompassing the Schedler property. Another fact is that the house cannot be moved, since it is composed of add-ons done over the past 200 years.

Ms. Gruber said that the Schedler neighbors and others took great care in 2017 to come up with a plan for the Schedler property, for everyone in the Ridgewood community to enjoy. Through much compromise, this 2017 plan included a medium-sized field, trees, a walking path, and the house. Ms. Gruber said that the only progress made to date regarding the Schedler property was the hiring by the Village of a “total incompetent” to assist with the project. She said that the Village has spent enormous sums of money and the Village Councilmembers have spent countless hours discussing the project. Ms. Gruber said that if the Village Council had abided by the 2017 plan, Village children would be playing on the Schedler field right now. Instead, there is soil testing being conducted and people are arguing with each other. She stated that there are over 30 playing fields in Ridgewood, and she cannot understand why the field for the Schedler property has become such a tremendous issue. She said that the Village Councilmembers are dividing the town, rather than unifying it.

Anne Loving, a Ridgewood resident, said that she and her husband watched the budget meeting held recently on February 3, 2025, and found it very interesting. She thanked the Village Councilmembers, Department Directors, and everyone else for all of the hours they have spent working on the 2025 Budget. Ms. Loving said that she had called in remotely and “raised” her hand during the February 3rd meeting, but she was not given the opportunity to speak. She said that she had some questions regarding the budget.

Ms. Loving asked why the Tax Collector was hired at a higher salary than what was allocated in the budget. She also asked how a female employee, or any employee, could step out of an office and see men in their underwear. Ms. Loving said that she cannot believe that this matter has not been immediately addressed by the Village Council. Mr. Kazmark mentioned during the February 3, 2025 budget meeting that the more trees that are planted in the Village, the more leaves that will have to be picked up, like this was a bad thing.

During the February 3, 2025 meeting, Ms. Loving said that Deputy Mayor Perron asked whether bagging leaves would be better than putting them in the street. It appeared to Ms. Loving that Deputy Mayor Perron’s comment was summarily dismissed and she was simply told that this could not be done. However, Ms. Loving stated that this suggestion should be researched, since some surrounding towns require that leaves be bagged. She remarked that some towns do not collect leaves at all. She stated that the method currently used to pick up leaves, with backhoes, dump trucks, and leaf blowers, seems to be a very labor-intensive process. She feels that bagging leaves would be a better method.

Ms. Loving said that she believes she heard that a \$15,000.00 raise was given to one employee who checks the recycling trucks. This raise was referred to as a “slight raise” by Christopher Rutishauser, Village Engineer; however, Ms. Loving said that a \$15,000.00 raise is quite substantial.

Ms. Loving stated that Mayor Vagianos publicly endorsed a political candidate, Congressman Josh Gottheimer, for New Jersey Governor from the dais recently. Therefore, she said that if any resident would like to sign a petition to get Steven Fulop on the ballot for Governor of New Jersey in the Primary Election, they should contact her.

There were no further comments from the public.

Responding to Ms. Loving’s comments about not being acknowledged when she tried to call in remotely, Mayor Vagianos indicated that her name did not show up on the screen indicating that she had “raised” her hand. He apologized for this technical snafu. He stated that he actually did not have a screen in front of him during the February 3, 2025 budget meeting, but instead was relying upon the technical support staff in the back of the room to alert him if there were any remote callers. Councilmember Winograd added that there had been someone who called in remotely that evening, but the connection was subsequently lost.

Regarding Ms. Gruber's comments about the delays in developing the Schedler property, Deputy Mayor Perron said that one of the reasons there is a delay is that the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has told the Village that the soil contamination has to be remediated prior to any development of the property. This remediation takes a long time, requiring time for analysis of the soil and other processes.

Councilmember Winograd stated that ever since she was elected to the Village Council, the Village has not spent any money on the Schedler property, other than for soil testing. She acknowledged that an historical consultant (Peter Primavera) was hired for less than \$50,000.00, similar to when Connelly & Hickey was hired by the Village to renovate the Zabriskie-Schedler house. Connelly & Hickey's budget was \$250,000.00. There was a new bond adopted, in response to requests from the public to have the soil tested on the Schedler property.

Councilmember Winograd stated that the Village has been stalled in its efforts to submit a plan to the State Historic Preservation Office, because the matter of the soil contamination must be dealt with first. Councilmember Winograd stated that she is frustrated that the house still remains vacant, even though the Certificate of Occupancy has been issued. She said that the only material change made to the plan developed in 2017 was the size of the field. The Village Councilmembers decided that it would be best to have a full-sized field, due to the persistent flooding experienced on the fields near the high school and at Maple Field.

Councilmember Weitz concurred with Councilmember Winograd and stated that the soil has to be remediated before any development of the property can occur.

Responding to a comment made by Ms. Loving, Mr. Kazmark stated that the Village's current Tax Collector was promoted "from within." When the previous Tax Collector was not reappointed, the position was advertised and interviews were held with both internal and external candidates. The salary adjustment occurred because the Tax Collector was already a Village employee, as opposed to an external candidate being hired at a specific salary.

Regarding the comment made by Ms. Loving, Mr. Kazmark said that the building at the Recycling Center is a very tight space. When Sean Hamlin, Coordinator of Recycling, spoke at the Budget Meeting on February 3, 2025, he was trying to make a point and embellished the fact that the building was so small that one could see into the locker room from the office. Mr. Kazmark has personally toured that building, including the locker room, office area, and garage area. He said that there are a lot of employees in a very small space. He said that if any Village employee is made to feel uncomfortable, he would address the matter immediately. However, such a situation has never been brought to his attention, since he began his position as Village Manager. The first time he ever heard about this concern was at Monday night's meeting.

In any event, Mr. Kazmark stated that the pressing concern at the moment at the Recycling Center is the problematic small parking lot, driveway area and building. Residents arrive to drop off recyclables, while at the same time Parks Division and Recycling Division employees clamber to find space to park vehicles and equipment. He said that Mr. Hamlin's budget requests seek to improve the situation at the Recycling Center.

Regarding his prior statement that more leaves need to be picked up when more trees are planted in the Village, Mr. Kazmark said that this was a known fact and was never meant to be interpreted that he was being critical of planting more trees. He reminded everyone that a significant amount of funding was allocated in the 2024 Capital Budget for the planting of more trees throughout the Village, which Mr. Kazmark fully supports. He said that he receives a lot of complaints about how long it takes to pick up the piles of leaves left in Village streets, and the leaves will be able to be picked up quicker in 2025, with the addition of extra employees to perform this task.

Regarding Ms. Loving's comment about the \$15,000.00 raise given to a Village employee, Mr. Kazmark clarified that there was no such raise. He said that he would relisten to the tape of the meeting to clarify same. Mr. Kazmark indicated that there are only two employees who are budgeted out of the Yard Waste/Recycling budget, and both are entitled to "step raises" (a predetermined, incremental increase in an employee's salary that occurs automatically as they gain seniority) under the Blue Collar Union Agreement.

3. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Kazmark began his Village Manager's report by announcing that the pavilion structure for Habernickel Park has been delivered this week. He anticipates that the project will take between 12 and 15 weeks to complete, depending upon the weather in the coming weeks.

A meeting with some employees was held this week, along with David Wilde, Recreation Program Specialist in the Parks and Recreation Department, in order to implement the final stages of the Master Library Program. This is the new scheduling program used by the Ridgewood Board of Education (BOE) and the Village of Ridgewood to schedule field and facility usage throughout the Village, on both BOE-owned and Village-owned assets. In the next month or two, all requests for facility usage will be made through the Master Library system. The Police Department will have read-only access to the system. Mr. Kazmark thanked Nancy Bigos, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, and David Wilde for their assistance in this regard.

Mr. Kazmark said that today, he received an update on the underground storage tank removal project at the North Walnut Street parking lot. Six underground storage tanks have been removed and three storage tanks remain underground. The Village is working closely with its Licensed

Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) to monitor this project. The environmental remediation continues next door to the parking lot, at the former Town Garage property. It is anticipated that both projects will be completed within 30 days, so that parking will be available again in the North Walnut Street parking lot.

Mr. Kazmark stated that over 195 questions have been submitted by the public to the Village and to Matrix New World Engineering, regarding the soil testing at the Schedler property. Responses to those questions have now been posted on the Village website. Thirty-one new questions were submitted on January 27, 2025 by another resident, and responses to those questions will be forthcoming as soon as possible.

Mr. Kazmark said that he visited Ms. Kelly's first-grade class at Willard School today, during which time they participated in "World Read Aloud Day." The book entitled "The North Star" was read during Mr. Kazmark's visit. He thanked the administration of the Ridgewood Public Schools and Ms. Kelly for the invitation.

On February 28, 2025, a Blood Drive will once again be held by the Ridgewood Health Department, in the Youth Lounge at Village Hall, from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. This event is held in collaboration with the New Jersey Blood Center. Everyone is encouraged to sign up for this event online.

Mr. Kazmark said that a snow/ice storm is expected for this evening. He reminded the public that snow must be removed from all sidewalks within 24 hours after snow has stopped falling. During inclement weather, for the safety of the sanitation crew, residents are requested to place trash cans at the end of their driveways during their regularly scheduled pickup day(s). Specifically, Mr. Kazmark requested that all residents place their trash containers by the curb on February 6 and February 7, 2025.

Village offices will be closed on February 12, 2025 in observance of Lincoln's Birthday, and also on February 17, 2025 in observance of Presidents' Day. The Recycling Center will also be closed on those dates, and there will be no garbage or recycling pickup on those days. Residents should check the Village Calendar for garbage and recycling pickups for the next two weeks, as pickup schedules have changed for these holidays.

The Parks and Recreation Department will be conducting a seasonal Summer Job Fair on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Community Center on the lower level of Village Hall. Any individuals who are 16 years of age or older are eligible to attend the Job Fair and apply for available positions. Anyone needing further information should call 201-670-5560.

Upcoming Village Council meetings are as follows: Work Session on February 26, 2025; Public Meeting on Monday, February 10, 2025 (since Wednesday, February 12, 2025 is a holiday); and Budget Meetings on February 19 and February 27, 2025. Work Sessions and Public Meetings commence at 7:30 p.m., and the Budget Meetings will commence at 5:00 p.m.

4. VILLAGE COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Winograd had a meeting today at Ridgewood High School with her intern team, to expand the idea that there needs to be more civic engagement among the students. The kissing balls used during the Christmas holiday need new bows. They also discussed “Mulch Monday” and Project Pride. Three interns are graduating this year, so more student interns are needed to help Village committees. Councilmember Winograd said that the students would like to have each of the Village Councilmembers visit the high school and speak to the students about intern opportunities. Councilmember Winograd thanked Jeff Nyhuis, Principal of Ridgewood High School, and all of the interns who have volunteered to help on various committees.

Councilmember Winograd said that she visited Ridge Elementary School and celebrated “World Read Aloud Day.” She read to students in kindergarten and third grade. She stated that the students were most interested in traffic and safety, as well as Village parks and how they are used. The students wanted to inform the Village Councilmembers that a roller coaster park should be constructed in Ridgewood and they should sponsor a video game “X Box Night.”

Councilmember Winograd said that she visited the Zabriskie-Schedler house with Peggy Norris, Village Historian and member of the Historical Society and Genealogical Societies of Bergen County, and members of the Newcomers Club. They did a walk-through of the house in an attempt to see if either the Historical Society or Newcomers Club were interested in using the house. Councilmember Winograd stated that neither nonprofit organization generates any revenue, so the house would not generate any rental income. They discussed the possibility of both groups using the house at the same time as a gathering place, with self-indemnification agreements and self-insurance in place.

Councilmember Winograd stated that the Zabriskie-Schedler house is in need of a cleaning, since she noted a significant number of flies in the bathroom. Councilmember Winograd said that the Village is incurring operating costs for the house every year, and the electric charges were \$3,100.00 in 2024. The Village also pays Village staff to periodically check on the house. Councilmember Winograd thanked both organizations for touring the house, as well as Carol Bialkowski for opening up the house for them. She stated that \$2.6 million was spent to renovate this house, and it will need to be furnished in the future with period-appropriate furniture. She expressed the dangers of leaving the house vacant for too long.

Councilmember Winograd said that there was a Fields Committee meeting on Tuesday morning (February 4, 2025), which was hosted by the Board of Education. During the meeting, there were technical difficulties, and this is not the first time problems have occurred with hybrid access. Councilmember Winograd has asked the Board of Education to provide an emergency contact number that people can call, if they are having issues with calling in to a meeting remotely. The meeting was very short (22 minutes).

Mr. Kazmark said that he attempted to call in remotely during the meeting, but couldn't get through. He spoke on the phone with Christine Corliss, Public Information Officer for Ridgewood Public Schools, after the conclusion of the meeting, and she is working to make sure that the link to future meetings is accurate and active. The emergency contact number will be posted on future meeting agendas, in the event people have difficulty joining the meeting remotely.

Councilmember Weitz said that none of his committees met since the last Village Council meeting. He said that he enjoyed interviewing residents, along with his Village Council colleagues, on Friday night, for filling available positions on various Village committees and boards. Councilmember Weitz said that he was impressed with the educational credentials and relevant experience of some of the interviewees. He said that he wanted to thank Mr. Kazmark and all of the Department Directors who gave their budget requests during the Budget Meeting on Monday, February 3, 2025.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that none of her committees met since the last Village Council meeting. There were no applications before the Planning Board. The Planning Board's subcommittee monitoring the progress on the Master Plan did meet and they discussed the element of the Master Plan that addresses historic preservation. The next meeting of the Planning Board will be held on February 18, 2025. Green Ridgewood and the Green Team will meet tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. in the Senior Lounge at Village Hall, weather permitting.

Deputy Mayor Perron indicated that there is a "Sports Swap" being sponsored by six elementary schools in Ridgewood. She encouraged anyone with sports equipment that they no longer need to donate it to this event. The equipment may be dropped off on March 8, 2025 between 12:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. at Hawes Elementary School. Anyone interested in shopping for sports equipment may do so on March 9, 2025 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

5. **DISCUSSION**

A. **RIDGEWOOD WATER**

1. **AWARD CONTRACT – QUALIFIED END USER – SOIL REMOVAL, TESTING, AND DISPOSAL OF RIDGEWOOD WATER’S SOIL SPOILS**

Richard Calbi, Director of Ridgewood Water, stated that this matter pertains to the award of a contract to a qualified contractor to remove, test, and dispose of excavated soil (soil spoils) from various Ridgewood Water distribution and maintenance projects. Three quotes were received, and it is recommended that this contract be awarded to REBCO Contracting Corp., of Lyndhurst, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.00. These services would be provided on an “on call” basis for 2025. REBCO has the lowest pricing and is a reputable contractor that provides these services for other utilities and municipalities in New Jersey. They utilize regional soil disposal facilities that follow proper state-regulated procedures for testing and disposal of both clean fill and “ID 27 Soil” material. Funding is contained in the Water Utility Operating Budget.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked what “ID 27 Soil” is, and Mr. Calbi replied that this is soil characterized as being non-hazardous, but does contain certain levels of contaminants. Councilmember Winograd asked why the contract is not to exceed \$100,000.00, but the quote from REBCO was for \$86,400.00. Mr. Calbi replied that they use the tonnage amounts to qualify the lowest quote, and the “not to exceed” amount budgeted for every year is \$100,000.00.

2. **AWARD SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT – EXCHANGE OF GRANULAR ACTIVATED CARBON – CARR TREATMENT PLANT AND TWINNEY TREATMENT PLANT**

Mr. Calbi stated that this item pertains to Ridgewood Water’s annual Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) exchange contract. GAC treatment is used for the removal of PFAS compounds in the water at Ridgewood Water’s treatment plants. The GAC filter media consists of a carbon-based product called Filtrasorb 400, which must be replaced before PFAS absorption rates have been exceeded. The Carr Treatment Plant went online on September 25, 2019, and the Twinney Treatment Plant was returned online in August of 2022, after the successful installation of GAC treatment. Based on current treatment facility runtime data, it is anticipated that both the Carr and Twinney Treatment Facilities will each require one to two media replacements in 2025.

Mr. Calbi explained that this is reactivated carbon, as opposed to virgin carbon out of the ground. The carbon that is in the treatment vessels is being reused. It is recommended that this Sole Source contract be awarded to Calgon Carbon Corporation, of Moon Township, Pennsylvania, in

an amount not to exceed \$278,400.00 (broken down as \$49,600.00 per replacement for the Twinney plant and \$89,600.00 per replacement for the Carr plant). Funding will be available in the Water Utility Operating Budget, dependent upon funds being allocated by the Village Council in the 2025 Budget to fund the full amount of the purchase.

Councilmember Mortimer asked how often the GAC needs to be changed. Mr. Calbi said that the replacement is based upon flow. The Carr and Twinney treatment plants are the two active plants, so the GAC treatment is used quite a bit. Based on the flow at these plants, replacements are usually needed twice a year. Once all 12 PFAS treatment plants are online, more GAC filter media will be needed.

**3. AWARD SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT – CONTROLWAVE RTU
PANEL DESIGN & FABRICATION – LINWOOD WELL**

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of a Sole Source contract to Emerson Process Management Power and Water Solutions, Inc., of Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania, to provide ControlWave Remote Telemetry Unit (RTU) Panel design and fabrication for the Linwood well. These are the computer systems that control each well and treatment facility. Emerson will provide engineering services and material for the RTU, which is necessary to operate the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system at the well house. Emerson is the only supplier and provider of the ControlWave RTU Panel, and it is recommended that this contract be awarded to them in an amount not to exceed \$31,607.06. Funding is budgeted for in the Water Utility Capital Budget.

**4. AWARD SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT – FURNISHING
CORROSION INHIBITOR**

Mr. Calbi indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a Sole Source contract to ESC Environmental, of Glenville, New York, in an amount not to exceed \$285,080.40. Mr. Calbi stated this is an annual contract for the purchase of polyorthophosphate to control corrosion in the water distribution system. This chemical is added to the water to prevent corrosion of lead and copper throughout the system. Since starting the use of this chemical in 2016, Mr. Calbi stated that he has seen lead and copper levels reduced significantly below the NJDEP action level. The last round of lead sampling was 2.7 parts per billion (ppb), and the NJDEP action limit is 15 ppb.

Mr. Calbi indicated that varying treatment formulas can alter the system characteristics and void the protections afforded by the current inhibitor. Stability with the same formula is important to maintain compliance and protection of public health and safety. He stated that he is currently testing other alternatives with the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Mr. Calbi said that the 2025 unit price represents a 4% decrease from the 2024 unit price. Funding will be available in

the Water Utility Operating Budget, dependent upon funds being allocated by the Village Council in the 2025 Budget to fund the full amount of the contract.

Councilmember Mortimer asked Mr. Calbi if the chemical would still need to be added to the system, once all of the lead service lines have been replaced. Mr. Calbi said that the NJDEP will still require the addition of the chemical to the system to control corrosion, because property owners still have lead in their homes.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked if the polyorthophosphate affects the taste of the water, and Mr. Calbi replied that it does not.

**5. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY – SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS
AT VARIOUS WATER FACILITIES**

Mr. Calbi stated that this item deals with the award of a contract, under an Educational Services Commission of New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Agreement, for the purchase of security improvements for various Ridgewood Water facilities. The purchase of these improvements will serve as an expansion to Ridgewood Water's existing Gentec security management system, and are necessary to complement the construction of new PFAS treatment facilities (Twinney, Ravine, Prospect, Ames, East Saddle River and Linwood wells) and other Ridgewood Water locations. The improvements will consist of the installation of 44 closed circuit television cameras and 16 door controls, along with associated hardware and labor. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Open System Integrators, Inc., of Hamilton, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$305,855.43. Funding is available in the Water Utility Capital Budget.

**6. AWARD EMERGENCY CONTRACT – EMERGENCY
CONSTRUCTION AND TREE REMOVAL SERVICES – WATER
MAIN BREAK**

Mr. Calbi explained that this matter pertains to the award of an emergency contract for construction and tree removal services due to a severe water main break, which was along the bank of a stream, the depths of which were unreachable by the Ridgewood Water crew. He stated that on January 18, 2025, Ridgewood Water declared a water emergency at 187 Sicomac Avenue in Midland Park, New Jersey, as a result of a water main break, which required emergency construction and tree maintenance services. The Chief Financial Officer and Village Manager approved the emergency declaration on January 18, 2025. In order to repair the broken water main, a large tree that was on top of it had to be removed by Downes Tree Service, Inc. Conquest Construction, Inc., completed the excavation that was started by Ridgewood Water, installed a trench box to locate the leak, and made the necessary repair to the water main. It is recommended that emergency contracts be awarded to Downes Tree Service, of Hawthorne,

New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$4,850.00, and to Conquest Construction, of Hackensack, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$16,534.08. Funding is budgeted for in the Water Utility Operating Budget.

Mayor Vagianos recused himself from the aspect of this matter which pertains to Downes Tree Service. Deputy Mayor Perron asked if the tree fell down on top of the water main, and Mr. Calbi said that the tree was growing on top of the water main and it would have been dangerous to excavate with the tree remaining there.

Councilmember Winograd asked Mr. Calbi if he replanted a tree in place of the removed tree, and he replied that he did not, since the tree was located in Midland Park. Councilmember Winograd asked Mr. Calbi if he could find out if Midland Park has a tree protection ordinance, and he said that he would try to find out that information. Mr. Kazmark added that it would be up to the property owner in Midland Park whether or not they wanted a tree replanted on their property.

**7. AWARD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT –
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES – DESIGN AND
PERMITTING – WEST GLEN BOOSTER STATION**

Mr. Calbi explained that this matter deals with the award of a professional services contract for the design and permitting assistance rendered by Mott MacDonald for the West Glen Booster Station. On September 20, 2024, the Chief Financial Officer and Village Manager approved an emergency declaration by Ridgewood Water (boil water advisory), due to low water pressure in the Intermediate Zone of the water system. On October 9, 2024, the Village Council awarded a contract to Mott MacDonald for a hydraulic modeling study of the low water pressure in the Intermediate Zone. As a result of this study, it was determined that the construction of a new booster station on West Glen Avenue was necessary to prevent future low-pressure events. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Mott MacDonald, of Iselin, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$45,000.00. Funding is budgeted for in the Water Utility Operating Budget. Mr. Calbi reported that the permit was submitted to the NJDEP and was deemed technically complete. He answered comments by the NJDEP reviewer today, and these responses will be further reviewed by a supervisor for approval. He anticipates receiving the permit within the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Kazmark thanked Mr. Calbi for all of his efforts in this matter. He received a draft report of the hydraulic modeling study performed by Mott MacDonald, which he stated was complete and concise. Mayor Vagianos expressed his thanks to Mr. Calbi as well, and stated that he appreciated how quickly Mr. Calbi moved this project along, so that it would be completed before the start of lawn-watering season.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked if the booster station will be above ground or below ground, and Mr. Calbi said that it was going to be a combination of both. A small above-ground “can” and electrical cabinet will be installed, and the remainder of the station will be underground in a vault. He said that this will be a permanent installation, rather than a temporary installation as originally proposed.

Before beginning his review of the following matters, Mr. Kazmark stated that he has begun a thorough vetting and “audit review” of all open Capital Budget balances from 2024 and earlier. Robert Rooney, Chief Financial Officer, is working alongside Mr. Kazmark in this endeavor. If specific Village departments still need to purchase items for which funds were appropriated in the 2024 Capital Budget, Mr. Kazmark is directing all Department Directors to make these purchases as soon as possible. If the need no longer exists, then Mr. Kazmark anticipates, once the 2025 Budget has been adopted, that he will be making a request to cancel the appropriated funds that were not spent. He indicated that many of the requests to be heard this evening have to do with spending these unused Capital Budget funds.

B. BUDGET

1. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER NORTH JERSEY WASTEWATER COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM THROUGH PASSAIC VALLEY SEWERAGE COMMISSION – TWO ANAEROBIC DIGESTER MIXERS – WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY

Mr. Kazmark explained that this matter pertains to the award of a contract, through the North Jersey Wastewater Cooperative Pricing System, through the Lead Agency, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission Cooperative Purchasing program, for the purchase of two digester mixers for the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF). The WPCF operates two anaerobic digesters at the plant to reduce the volume of sludge for offsite disposal. Each digester has three mixers, which are operated 24/7. A replacement mixer was installed this week by Rapid Pump and Meter Service Company, Inc. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Rapid Pump and Meter Service Company, Inc., of Paterson, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$462,900.00. The existing mixers were installed in 2005, and there is a long lead time before the product is obtained. Funds are available in the 2024 Capital Budget.

2. **AWARD CONTRACT UNDER NORTH JERSEY WASTEWATER
COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM THROUGH PASSAIC
VALLEY SEWERAGE COMMISSION – TWO RETURN
ACTIVATED SLUDGE PUMPS – WATER POLLUTION
CONTROL FACILITY**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a contract, through the North Jersey Wastewater Cooperative Pricing System, through the Lead Agency, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission Cooperative Purchasing program, for the purchase of Return Activated Sludge (RAS) pumps for the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF). The WPCF operates two RAS pumps as part of the treatment train at the plant to move sludge. These pumps operate around the clock and are getting old, and it is recommended that replacement pumps be ordered before the existing pumps fail. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Rapid Pump and Meter Service Company, Inc., of Paterson, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$219,480.00. Funds are available in the 2024 Capital Budget.

3. **AWARD CONTRACT – NORTH JERSEY WASTEWATER
COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM THROUGH PASSAIC
VALLEY SEWERAGE COMMISSION – ONE SKID MOUNTED
NON-POTABLE WATER BOOSTER SYSTEM – WATER
POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a contract, through the North Jersey Wastewater Cooperative Pricing System, through the Lead Agency, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission Cooperative Purchasing program, for the purchase of a Skid-Mounted Non-Potable Water (NPW) Booster System for the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF). The WPCF operates an NPW booster system to provide pressurized effluent water for operational needs, rather than using potable water from Ridgewood Water, at a significant cost. The current system was installed during the last plant upgrade in 2005, and the current system is experiencing breakdowns. Two of the three current pumps are not working, and the electric controls have failed. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Rapid Pump and Meter Service Company, Inc., of Paterson, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$248,990.00. Funds are available in the 2024 Capital Budget.

4. **AWARD CONTRACT NORTH JERSEY WASTEWATER COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM THROUGH PASSAIC VALLEY SEWERAGE COMMISSION – TRAILER MOUNTED DIESEL BYPASS PUMP FOR CLARIFIERS – WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a contract, through the North Jersey Wastewater Cooperative Pricing System, through the Lead Agency, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission Cooperative Purchasing program, for the purchase of an eight-inch Trailer-Mounted Diesel Bypass Pump for the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF). The WPCF utilizes a portable bypass pump to empty clarifiers and aeration basins when they need servicing or repairs, or an emergency situation develops (if a human or animal falls into the basin). The current pump is getting old and showing its age. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Rapid Pump and Meter Service Company, Inc., of Paterson, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$163,225.00. Mr. Kazmark added that this bypass pump will also be used to drain Graydon Pool each spring, before the start of the summer season. Funds are available in the 2024 Capital Budget.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked the age of the existing pump. Mr. Kazmark said that he will find out an answer to this question and will let her know tomorrow.

5. **AWARD CONTRACT UNDER STATE CONTRACT – DISSOLVED OXYGEN SENSOR SYSTEM FOR AERATION TANKS – WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY**

Mr. Kazmark explained that this matter involves an award of contract, under State contract, for the purchase of a Dissolved Oxygen Sensor System for Aeration Tanks for the Water Pollution Facility (WPCF). The WPCF has to carefully monitor the dissolved oxygen (DO) levels in the four aeration tanks, as part of the treatment train. The current DO sensor system was installed during the plant upgrade in 2005. The current DO sensors are no longer being made, and the system must be replaced. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Miller Energy, Inc., of South Plainfield, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$17,822.57. Funds are available in the 2024 Capital Budget.

6. **AWARD CONTRACT UNDER STATE CONTRACT – 2024 FORD F-550 CHASSIS AND DUMP BODY – STREETS DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter deals with the award of a contract, under the New Jersey State Contract Purchasing Program, for the purchase of a new 2024 Ford F-550 chassis and dump body for the Streets Division. This vehicle replaces vehicle SD-206, which is a 2011 Ford F-450 truck with 107,000 miles on it. This purchase will be made with funds contained in the

2024 Capital Budget. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Route 23 Automall LLC, of Butler, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$84,396.00. The vehicle will become part of the Street Division's snow plowing fleet.

7. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER STATE CONTRACT – 2024 FORD F-550 TRUCK WITH DUMP BODY – STREETS DEPARTMENT

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter deals with the award of a contract, under the New Jersey State Contract Purchasing Program, for the purchase of a new 2024 Ford F-550 truck and dump body for the Streets Division. This vehicle would replace the Ford F-650 truck that was transferred to the Traffic and Signal Division. This purchase will be made with funds contained in the 2024 Capital Budget. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Route 23 Automall LLC, of Butler, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$82,616.00. The vehicle will become part of the Street Division's snowplowing fleet.

There was a discussion between Mr. Kazmark and Councilmember Weitz, in which Mr. Kazmark explained how funds in the 2024 Capital Budget and in earlier Capital Budgets should be used up, before new funds are appropriated in 2025. This will create less of a burden when the Village Councilmembers develop and adopt the 2025 Capital Budget. Councilmember Weitz said that he was in favor of using up old capital funds, but he didn't want to create a "use it or lose it" situation.

8. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING CONTRACT – SNOWPLOWS FOR FORD F-550 TRUCKS – STREETS DEPARTMENT

Mr. Kazmark explained that this item pertains to the award of a contract, through the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program, for the purchase of two snowplows for the Streets Division. These snowplows will be attached to the two new 2024 Ford F-550 trucks with dump bodies that the Streets Division is purchasing to replace vehicle SD-206 and the Ford F-650 truck that was given to the Signal Division. This purchase will be made with funds contained in the 2024 Capital Budget. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to FDR Hitches, of Hawthorne, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$15,942.60.

Mayor Vagianos asked if the old snowplows utilized by the Streets Division would fit the new Ford F-550 trucks being purchased. Mr. Kazmark indicated that he would find out an answer to this question and let Mayor Vagianos know what he finds out. Mr. Kazmark added that some of the snowplows currently used by the Streets Division are old and antiquated, and it is not always recommended, according to Best Practices, to attach an old snowplow to a new vehicle. He expressed confidence that the employees in the Streets Division get the useful lives out of all of their equipment.

9. AUTHORIZE BUDGET RESERVE TRANSFERS

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the authorization of budget reserve transfers. These transfers, at the recommendation of Mr. Rooney, will enable the Village to meet its final obligations for the reserve year. These funds consist of \$114,000.00 in the Current Fund and \$390,000.00 in the Water Utility Fund.

**10. AUTHORIZE SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT –
MAINTENANCE OF FIRE AND TRAFFIC SIGNAL (HO-HO-KUS)**

Mr. Kazmark explained that this item deals with the authorization of a Shared Services Agreement with the Borough of Ho-Ho-Kus, for the Village to provide traffic signal maintenance and repair services, miscellaneous traffic signage, and assistance with the installation of holiday decorations to Ho-Ho-Kus. The Village's Traffic and Signal Division has skilled and trained staff to provide these services. The Shared Services Agreement would be for the calendar year 2025 and will expire on December 31, 2025.

Ms. Mailander added that Mr. Rutishauser informed her that they are also going to include the fiber network. The Shared Services Agreement will be updated accordingly, before the Village Councilmembers vote on this matter. Upon questioning by Deputy Mayor Perron, Mr. Kazmark explained that the Traffic and Signal Division maintains the fiber network in the Village, as well as in Midland Park, Ho-Ho-Kus and Glen Rock, when the Traffic and Signal Division crew are performing work in those municipalities.

Mayor Vagianos asked how much revenue would be generated from this Shared Services Agreement, and Mr. Kazmark replied that he did not know at this time. It depends upon how much work is done by the Traffic and Signal Division for Ho-Ho-Kus during the year. Mayor Vagianos said that Shared Services Agreements are the way to move forward in the future, to realize cost savings for the Village.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked how the actual hours of labor expended under this agreement would be calculated. Mr. Kazmark said that the cost is broken down by the staff that is utilized from the Traffic and Signal Division, depending upon the work that is being performed. He said that the vehicle and equipment charges are listed with hourly rates in the Shared Services Agreement.

C. POLICY

1. AMEND CHAPTER 249 – STREETS AND SIDEWALKS AND CHAPTER 145 – FEES – RESCIND ANNUAL SIDEWALK PERMIT FOR SIDEWALK CONTRACTORS

Mr. Kazmark explained that this matter deals with amending Chapter 249, Streets and Sidewalks, and Chapter 145, Fees, to rescind the annual sidewalk permits for sidewalk contractors and corresponding fees. The Village implemented the annual permit program in 2015, which eliminated the need for sidewalk contractors to obtain a permit for each location at which sidewalk work is done. However, over the past decade, contractors holding annual permits have opened up multiple sidewalk locations at once and did not always notify the Village of same. This creates a situation where the sidewalks are open for months, if the necessary root grinding is not done promptly by the Parks Department. Often, open locations have to wait for months for root grinding, forcing residents and pedestrians to walk in the street when the sidewalk is closed.

Yendi Anderson, in the Engineering Department, did an analysis of the revenue lost by the Village, due to the annual sidewalk permits as opposed to individual sidewalk permits. She calculated that the Village has lost \$21,000.00 in revenue from January 2019 to January 2025. It is recommended that the ordinances allowing for annual sidewalk permits (Chapter 249) and respective fees (Chapter 145) be rescinded and replaced with new ordinances requiring individual sidewalk permits and respective fees. This will give the Village better control over sidewalk repair work and assist in coordinating tree inspections, root grinding, and form inspections.

There was a brief discussion between Councilmember Mortimer and Mr. Kazmark about the number of contractors who obtain annual sidewalk permits per year and how these permits result in a lack of accountability on the part of the sidewalk contractors. Councilmember Mortimer said his only concern is that rescinding the annual sidewalk permits might delay the completion of sidewalk repairs for Village residents, although he understood about the loss of revenue to the Village.

Deputy Mayor Perron agreed and was concerned that rescinding the annual sidewalk permits for contractors would raise the cost to homeowners who need to repair/replace their sidewalks. She stated that more time would be required of contractors to obtain permits from the Building Department for every single sidewalk job, and Deputy Mayor Perron was concerned that the costs for this extra time would be passed along to customers.

Councilmember Weitz said that he agreed with Councilmember Mortimer and Deputy Mayor Perron. He asked whether there was another way in which more accountability on the part of sidewalk contractors could be monitored, while keeping the annual sidewalk permits. He

wondered if there was a way to keep the status quo of the annual permits, but require the contractor to get approval from the Village before each sidewalk job is begun. The process could be done electronically, so that a contractor would not have to physically go to the Building Department to obtain a permit for each job.

Mr. Kazmark said that he was not sure there was a way for the Village to determine whether or not rescinding the annual sidewalk permits would cost homeowners more. He said that this matter could be tabled for another Work Session, until Mr. Rutishauser had the opportunity to speak before the Village Council regarding same. Mr. Kazmark said that his main concern is the significant loss of revenue to the Village. Councilmembers Weitz and Winograd both stated that they would like Mr. Rutishauser to attend a Village Council meeting to speak about this issue, so that they can get a better understanding of any subsequent consequences of rescinding the annual sidewalk permits.

Mayor Vagianos stated that he would like to hear Mr. Rutishauser's opinions regarding the annual sidewalk permits. However, after reading the memorandum prepared by Mr. Rutishauser regarding this matter, Mayor Vagianos said that it appeared that contractors are required to notify the Engineering Department that they are working on a particular sidewalk job, and the contractors often fail to do so. Mayor Vagianos suggested that the annual sidewalk permits be left as is, but that fines be imposed upon contractors who fail to notify the Engineering Department that they are working on a particular sidewalk job. Not requiring individual permits for each job would also alleviate the workload in the Building Department. Mr. Kazmark said that he would ask Mr. Rutishauser to appear at the Village Council meeting on February 26, 2025 to discuss this matter.

D. OPERATIONS

1. AUTHORIZE EXECUTION OF BERGEN COUNTY TRUST FUND PROJECT CONTRACT – GRANT FOR MUNICIPAL PARK PROJECT – VETERANS FIELD INSTALLATION OF ENERGY-EFFICIENT LIGHTING

Mr. Kazmark stated that this matter pertains to an authorization for Mayor Vagianos to execute the Bergen County Trust Fund Project Contract, regarding the Open Space Trust Fund grant for the Veterans Field lighting project. The Village will pay initially for the lighting upgrades and then will be reimbursed the grant amount of \$103,323.00, once proof of such payment is sent to Bergen County.

6. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ellie Gruber, a Ridgewood resident, stated that, a while back, there was a trial of flexible sidewalk materials used on South Irving Street, in an attempt to save a tree that was uplifting the sidewalk slabs. Ms. Gruber said that these sidewalks are beautiful and she walks on them often. She asked if the Village Councilmembers had considered this flexible sidewalk material as an alternative to removing trees interfering with sidewalks.

Addressing Councilmember Winograd, Ms. Gruber said that the berm construction at the Schedler property was a good idea, but the construction was poorly done and the trees planted on the berm are dying. She asked Mr. Rogers why those trees have not been replaced after two years, since she was under the understanding that the tree company had guaranteed the trees' survival and the matter ended up in litigation. She feels that Mr. Rutishauser did a poor job with importing the soil to the Schedler property, since the soil was not properly tested as residents had requested. Residents were assured that all of the proper testing of the soil had been performed.

Cynthia O'Keefe, a Ridgewood resident, said that she still needs to read all of the answers to the questions from the public, regarding the soil contamination at the Schedler property, that are posted on the Village website. She indicated that there was an item on the agenda this evening from Ridgewood Water requesting the awarding of a contract to hire a qualified end user to remove, test, and dispose of soil spoils from excavations performed by Ridgewood Water. According to the report by Matrix New World Engineering, Ridgewood Water imported soil spoils to the northwestern portion of the Schedler property, near Block 4704, Lot 12. Ms. O'Keefe indicated that the NJDEP was not satisfied with the information regarding the source of said soil. She asked if a qualified end user will be hired to remove and dispose of the contaminated soil at the Schedler property. Ms. O'Keefe stated that snow containing rock salt and other chemicals was dumped at the Schedler property as well. She said that she can understand how a mistake could have been made with soil testing, but not with fill that was soil spoils.

Ms. O'Keefe said that the wetlands application, prepared by Suburban Engineering Consultants for the Schedler property, stated that no hazards were found onsite. However, lead, mercury, benzo(a)pyrene and benz(a)anthracene were considered to be hazards when they were found in the soil at the Schedler property by Matrix. Ms. O'Keefe asked for clarification of what Suburban Engineering Consultants meant when they stated that "no hazards" were found on the Schedler property.

There were no further comments from the public.

Addressing Ms. Gruber's comments, Mr. Kazmark said that the Village still needs to determine how effective and durable the flexible sidewalk material is during the winter months, specifically

after it has been exposed to snow and deicing materials. An evaluation of the flexible sidewalk material will be performed in the spring of 2025 to determine its durability.

Regarding the comments made by Ms. O’Keefe regarding the berm constructed on the Schedler property, Mr. Kazmark said that he was not Village Manager at that time. However, he has learned since becoming Village Manager that the soil was indeed tested before being imported to the Schedler property, but the applicable NJDEP standards for soil testing were not necessarily applied. Mr. Kazmark stated that new policies have been implemented in the Village regarding soil testing, including utilizing a Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) when soil needs to be tested, since there is no Village staff member who is qualified to do so. He said that there will always be soil spoils, especially when a site needs to be excavated for a water main break.

Regarding the Wetlands Letter of Interpretation (LOI) for the Schedler property, Mr. Kazmark said that he is not aware of what the LOI contained. He said that the Village hired Suburban Consulting Engineers to conduct the wetlands study. Everything that Matrix submitted to the Village regarding the Schedler property was shared with Suburban. Councilmember Winograd indicated that she believes the LOI was prepared before anyone in the Village was aware that there was soil contamination on the Schedler property, and she asked for confirmation in this regard.

Addressing Ms. Gruber’s earlier comments, Councilmember Winograd encouraged Ms. Gruber to contact her with any concerns. She said that she realizes public comments are limited to three minutes per person. She remarked that she had coffee yesterday with someone who opposes the use of artificial turf, and she said that their meeting was delightful, even though Councilmember Winograd is a proponent of artificial turf.

Councilmember Winograd emphasized that none of the existing Village Councilmembers had anything to do with the design or construction of the Schedler berm. In fact, she was advocating for more “public light” on the Schedler development project, when the berm was installed, because the project had stalled. She said that a prior Village Council authorized the construction of the berm with contaminated soil and, in addition, submitted a development plan secretly to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). She said that this plan included a pickleball court. Regarding the berm, Councilmember Winograd said that she personally went to the Village Attorney and told him about the condition of the trees on the berm, which halted any further payments to the vendor who had provided the trees. Taxpayer money was recovered for the 55 trees on the berm that failed to thrive. Councilmember Winograd added that all of the Village Councilmembers are committed to rectifying the soil contamination issues at the Schedler property.

Addressing Ms. O’Keefe, Mr. Kazmark encouraged her to read the last set of answers that were provided to questions posed to Matrix regarding the Schedler property, which are posted on the Village website, since there are some questions/answers related to the soil spoil piles. He said that there is misinformation in the community, and Ms. O’Keefe will get the answers she is seeking by reading the answers posted on the Village website.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she was confused about the term “soil spoils,” since the contract just awarded for Ridgewood Water indicates that “soil spoils” include clean fill and ID 27 soil material that has contaminants. She does not want the public to think that all excavated soil is contaminated.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Village Council, on a motion by Councilmember Winograd, seconded by Councilmember Weitz, and carried unanimously by voice vote, the Village Council’s Regular Public Work Session was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Paul Vagianos
Mayor

Heather A. Mailander
Village Clerk